

## **THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION SMALL BUSINESS PROCUREMENT PLAN for FY 2009**

The following are responses to each of the nine evaluation measures or elements regarding the small business program plan for fiscal year 2009.

### **1. Implemented strategic plan to increase the value of competitively awarded contracts to small businesses during the period**

RESPONSE: Yes. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has documented and implemented a strategy to strengthen opportunities in Federal contracting to small business. The documentation appears in the SSA Handbook. The SSA Handbook is a supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation and is available to SSA acquisition professionals on the agency intranet pages. A sample of a documented and implemented strategy is a mandate for the contracting officer to consider making the award to: a small business concern, a HUBZone small business concern, a small disadvantaged business concern, a women-owned small business concern, or a service-disabled veteran-owned small business concern when placing an order under a General Services Administration Federal Supply Schedule.

The OSDBU will review invitations to numerous local and national trade association events, conference, and procurement seminars in an effort to maximize small business utilization. The OSDBU's attendance at these events is subject to the limitations of the travel budget. The tentative outreach schedule is the Alliance Baltimore Procurement Conference on November 13, 2008 and the OSDBU Procurement Conference in April 2009.

### **2. Demonstrated top-level Agency commitment to small business contracting during the period**

RESPONSE: Yes. The Social Security Administration has a written document expressing commitment to small business contracting from the Deputy Commissioner of Budget, Finance and Management. The statement of commitment is currently posted on agency acquisition internet and intranet sites.

The Deputy Commissioner of Budget, Finance and Management issued a directive to the Head of the Contracting Activity to incorporate small business acquisition advocacy in the performance plans of all GS 1102 series employees working in the Office of Acquisition and Grants. The performance expectation for the contract specialists is to advocate use of socio-economic programs in acquisition planning to achieve agency small business goals.

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### **3. Planned significant events to increase small business participation in the procurement process during the period.**

RESPONSE: On June 11, 2009 the Social Security Administration will host its second annual small business procurement conference. The one day outreach event will be open to all small business preference groups.

### **4. Demonstrates that small business data is accurately reported in FPDS-NG during the period.**

Response: The Social Security Administration will provide classroom and on-the-job training to contracting personnel aimed at improving accuracy of FPDS-NG reporting. The agency will conduct statistically valid comparisons of our FPDS-NG data to the contract files. The completion of the statistical comparisons and analysis is scheduled for the first quarter of fiscal year 2009 with a report to be issued in January 2009. The OSDBU will continue to diagnose and correct, when possible, coding issues that arise within FPDS-NG to ensure accuracy of awards to small business concerns. The statistically valid comparisons will be conducted on all types of FPDS-NG coding errors.

The acquisition office information page includes an encouragement to businesses to register in the Central Contractor Registration. A pamphlet promoting how small business concerns should seek acquisition opportunities at SSA includes information on registration in CCR.

### **5. Demonstrates that policies and procedures are in place to ensure compliance with subcontracting plans and attainment of subcontracting goals during the period.**

RESPONSE: Yes. The OSDBU and the resident Procurement Center Representative will review subcontracting plans for contracts with large businesses valued greater than \$550,000. When appropriate recommended improvements are offered to the contracting officer before the contract is awarded. The agency supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation has policies and procedures that guide contracting officers on how to enforce the conditions in small business subcontracting plans after contract award. All contracting officers responsible for subcontract plans have received training in the use of the Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System (eSRS).

The SSA Head of the Contracting Activity will reinforce to the contracting officers and managers to administer the compliance of subcontracting plans on large business primes. The OSDBU will screen eSRS on a routine basis and provide SSA users with assistance and instructions necessary to report accurate subcontracting data. The OSDBU will participate in the eSRS User Group and Change Control Board.

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### **6. Demonstrate no unjustified bundling has taken place during the period.**

RESPONSE: Yes. The agency already has documented policies that are used to prevent unjustified bundling. The documented policy on bundling reviews appears in the agency supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation. The supplement known as the SSA Handbook was recently amended to include the requirement for the Procurement Center Representative to review all future bundling justifications. The OSDBU will work closely with the Procurement Center Representative to develop bundling justification templates for use by the contracting officers. The mandatory Procurement Center Representative review of bundling justifications will ensure that unjustified bundling will not be proposed.

### **7. Planned training to contracting staff/managers in executing small business/socioeconomic procurements during the period.**

RESPONSE: Yes. The OSDBU conducts semi-annual socio-economic program training for the contracting officers. The first training session will be on November 12, 2008. The training focuses on the agency policy to encourage small business participation in the acquisition process and the partnership agreement with SBA dealing with the 8(a) business development program. The training session will provide guidance and instruction on bundling reviews, FPDS-NG data entry, eSRS system functions, and subcontracting plan evaluations. A second training session will be given as a refresher in the third quarter of fiscal year 2009.

Additionally, the SBA Office of Veterans Business Development will be invited to conduct classroom training on the service disabled veteran owned small business program. New hires will be required to view the SBA ReadyTalk pre-recorded Partnership Agreement training to ensure that 8(a) business development program is being applied as intended.

### **8. Planned to collaborate with SBA on formulation of small business procurement policy initiatives during the period.**

RESPONSE: The agency OSDBU is a member of the Small Business Procurement Advisory Council. The OSDBU is also a member of the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council and the OSDBU Interagency Council. Each council works closely with the U. S. Small Business Administration in the formulation of procurement policy initiatives.

The OSDBU will invite the Small Business Administration to the June 11, 2009 Small Business Procurement Conference.

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### 9. Agency submits all strategic plans and reports that became due to SBA during the reporting period.

RESPONSE: Yes. The Social Security Administration has met 100% of deadlines for all required strategic plans and annual reports that were due to SBA from October 1, 2007 through the date of submission of the First Scorecard Report to SBA. The agency plans to submit all required strategic plans and annual reports due to SBA in accordance with the following schedule.

SSA REPORTS/PLANS CHECKLIST	
REPORT NAME	SCHEDULE
Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Annual Report	Agency is not required by regulation to submit this report
Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) Annual Report	Agency is not required by regulation to submit this report
Competitive Demonstration Program Report	Agency is not a participant in the Competitive Demonstration Program
Annual Report and Fiscal Year Update for Strategic Plan to Contract with Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses (SDVOSB)	SDVOSB Report will be mailed to SBA by January 31 <sup>st</sup>
Annual Contract Bundling Report	Bundling Report will be mailed to SBA by January 31 <sup>st</sup>
Progress Report on Increasing Opportunities for Women-Owned Small Businesses	Progress Report will be mailed to SBA by August Scorecard (FY2009 Plan), January 31st Scorecard (FY2008 Progress)
Corrective Actions to Address Unmet FY 2006 Socio-Economic Goals	Corrective Actions Report will be mailed to SBA by January 31st